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**China's Propaganda and Influence Operations, Its Intelligence Activities that  
Target the United States and it's the Resulting Impacts on US National Security,**

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**The Frame: Public Diplomacy and Soft Power**

The phrase 'Public Diplomacy' means simply the process by which an international actor conducts foreign policy by engaging a foreign public. Though the term in its present use dates only from 1965, the five core practices which make up public diplomacy each have much greater antiquity. The foundational practice of public diplomacy is Listening: engaging a foreign public by collecting and collating its opinions and feeding that into either different policy or at least a more effective explanation. The second is Advocacy: engaging a foreign public by direct presentation of policy and information. The third is Cultural Diplomacy: engaging a foreign public through the facilitated export of or participation in culture, including sports. The fourth is Exchange Diplomacy, engaging a foreign public through mutual exchange of personnel, especially students and military. The fifth is International Broadcasting: engaging foreign publics through direct broadcasting of news particularly. While these forms overlap (as when international broadcasting incorporates culture, advocacy and audience research, or when culture works through exchange) the basic elements cohere around distinct infrastructures, time-frames of operation, sources of credibility and even working practices. The entire structure of Public Diplomacy works with the policies, culture and values of the society conducting that public diplomacy – the factors which Joseph Nye has famously dubbed the Soft Power of an actor. These Soft Power factors must also be considered in any assessment of an actor's public diplomacy: the best public diplomacy structures in the world can not sell a bad policy, but an excellent public diplomacy structure can not only make good policies known, it can feed international opinion back into the policy process and make good policies even better.

**The Origins of Contemporary Chinese Public Diplomacy**

There are three basic points of origin for contemporary Chinese public diplomacy. There is a traditional Chinese concern with issues of image in all relationships; there is the history of external propaganda practiced by the Communist regime and there is the recent realization of the central role that public diplomacy and communication must take in the new world: the immediate cause of the policies that writer Joshua Kurlantzick has dubbed China's Charm Offensive.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Joshua Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive: How China's Soft Power is Transforming the World*. Yale: New Haven, 2007.

Chinese culture places great value on personal image, through the concepts which the west translates as ‘face’ (*Lian*, a concept of personal honor and moral worth, and *Mianzi*, a concept social prestige).<sup>2</sup> Public diplomacy reflects an extension of these concerns to the international sphere. Centuries before Joseph Nye, Confucius himself spoke of ‘attracting by virtue’ (*yide laizhi*) and argued that an image of virtue and morality was the foundation of a stable state.<sup>3</sup> Successive Chinese governments (and culturally Chinese regimes elsewhere) have deployed foreign policies to the same ends.

The revolutionary government of Mao – tutored in the international propaganda activities of the Soviet Union – was swift to extend its own use of propaganda to international sphere. The traditional term for such work is ‘*dui wai xuan chuan*’ or ‘*wai xuan*’ meaning ‘external propaganda.’<sup>4</sup> Mao’s ‘*xuan chuan*’ was based on a tightly controlled message. The regime carefully selected those aspects of China that would be seen abroad and censored much. Favoured journalists were allowed glimpses of the nation, while state journals like *Beijing Review* showcased achievements. Radio Beijing harangued the world about the Chairman’s monopoly on virtue. The regime sought to export its revolution by sponsoring Communist Parties first in East Asia and later Africa and Latin America.<sup>5</sup>

The post-Mao reforms launched in 1979 by Deng Xiao Ping included the opening of China to international exchange and tourism. In 1983 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs opened an Information Department. In 1989 the house of cards that was China’s international reputation came crashing down with the negative images arising from the repression of the protests in Tiananmen Square. In the aftermath of the crisis Beijing engaged the international public relations firm Hill and Knowlton to begin the process of rebuilding China’s reputation. The parallel process of consolidation followed at home included the reconfiguration of domestic and international information work under a single State Council Information Office (SCIO), founded in 1991. Its declared purpose was to ‘promote China as a stable country in the process of reform, a China that takes good care of its population, including minorities, and works hard to reduce poverty.’ It was a foundation for future work.<sup>6</sup>

As the 1990s progressed Beijing placed renewed emphasis on its international image. SCIO flourished under the dynamic leadership of the former vice major of

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<sup>2</sup> For a classic exploration of the concepts see David Yau-Fai Ho, ‘On the Concept of Face,’ *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 81 (4), 1976, pp. 867–84.

<sup>3</sup> Qing Cao, ‘Selling Culture: ancient Chinese conceptions of the other in legends,’ in S. Chan, P. Mandaville, and R. Bleiker (eds), *The Zen of International Relations: IR theories from East to West*. Palgrave: New York, 2001, pp. 178-202.

<sup>4</sup> For discussion and survey of contemporary work see Wang Yiwei, ‘Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power,’ *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 616, March 2008, (special issue ‘Public Diplomacy in a changing world,’) pp. 257-290.

<sup>5</sup> For a survey of the evolution of Chinese PD see Hongying Wang, ‘National Image-Building and Chinese foreign policy,’ *China: An International Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, March 2003, pp. 46-72.

<sup>6</sup> Ingrid d’Hooghe, ‘Public diplomacy in the People’s Republic of China,’ in Jan Melissen (ed.) *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave, London, 2005, pp. 92, 98-99.

Shanghai, Minister Zhao Qizheng, who led the office from 1998 to 2005.<sup>7</sup> Shy of the negative spin that the west gave to ‘propaganda,’ his innovations including dropping the term ‘*xuan chuan*’ in favour of the more benign ‘*shuo ming*’ or ‘explaining’.<sup>8</sup> He had an uncharacteristic charisma and was prepared to take risks including conceding error and sharing the stage with potential critics, as when in 2005 he engaged in a sustained dialogue on religion with the American evangelist, Luis Palau.<sup>9</sup> Zhao’s determination to present China to the world was supported at the highest level and in February 1999 President Jiang Zemin called for China to ‘establish a publicity capacity to exert an influence on world opinion that is as strong as China’s international standing.’<sup>10</sup> This led directly to a number of parallel policies, coordinated through the dual structure of the Communist Party and SCIO – Zhao was double hated as both director of SCIO and of the International Communication Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party.<sup>11</sup>

Since Zhao Qizheng moved to his present role as dean of the Communication School at Remin University and a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) (where he is vice chair of its foreign affairs committee) the most prominent figure in Chinese public diplomacy has been the director of the Publicity Department of the Central Committee, Lui Yushan. Director of the Publicity Department since 2002 and a member of the Polit Bureau since 2007, Lui is a regular source of edicts on matters of propaganda and international image at home and abroad and has been personally part of China’s charm offensive personally conducting international visits such as a trip to Egypt in November 2008.<sup>12</sup> The present director of SCIO is Wang Cheng who is integrated into the party system through his dual role at deputy to Lui Yushan in the Party Publicity Department.

During the course of 2007 the Chinese government began an explicit focus on Soft Power as a dimension of foreign policy. In February 2007 Soft Power was the focus of the annual conferences of both the National People’s Congress (China’s parliament) and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference. Participants acknowledged the scale of the challenge that still lay ahead.<sup>13</sup> The year culminated in October with a formal call by President Hu Jintao at the 17<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Communist Party to enhance the ‘soft power’ of Chinese culture through methods including management of the internet and investment in cultural institutions at home. ‘The great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation’ he argued ‘we definitely be accomplished by the thriving of Chinese

<sup>7</sup> Erik Eckholm, ‘China admits ecological sins played role in flood disaster,’ *New York Times*, 26 August 1998, p. A1.

<sup>8</sup> Todd Crowell and David Hsieh, ‘Beijing’s spin doctor,’ *Asia Week*, 22 September 2000. In 2005 an anthology of Zhao Qizheng’s speeches appeared with the title *Xiang Shijie Shuoming Zhongguo* (Explain China to the World). See also ‘Hong Kong daily analyses official’s role in improving China’s public image,’ *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, 7 June 2005.

<sup>9</sup> Luis Palau and Zhao Qizheng, *A Friendly Dialogue Between an Atheist and a Christian*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> ‘President calls for further propaganda work to enhance China’s image abroad,’ *Xinhua*, 28 February 1999 as cited in Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive*, p. 39.

<sup>11</sup> The structure may be readily constructed from biographical entries on the Chinavita website.

<sup>12</sup> For a brief vita see [http://www.chinavita.org/biography/Liu\\_Yunshan%7C32](http://www.chinavita.org/biography/Liu_Yunshan%7C32)

<sup>13</sup> Li Baojie, Cheng Yifeng and Wang Mian, ‘Soft Power a new focus at China’s Two Sessions.’ *Xinhua*, 14 March 2007.

culture.’<sup>14</sup> The theme has been widely underlined. Typical explications include an un-attributed article on the *Xinhua* site of 28 December 2007 with the title ‘Raise National Culture’s Soft Strength.’ The piece echoed Hu Jintao with a call for ‘raising our cultural propaganda abilities and continuously expanding China’s cultural influence,’ continuing:

The influence of a country’s culture depends on whether it possesses unique charm but also depends on whether it possesses advanced propaganda methods and strong propaganda capabilities. Especially in today’s informatized society every country that has advanced propaganda methods and strong propaganda capabilities can widely spread its cultural ideals and value concepts, and it can grasp the speaking power to influence the world and popular feeling. Cultural propaganda capabilities have already become a decisive factor for a national culture’s soft strength.<sup>15</sup>

### **The Message**

The central message of Chinese public diplomacy is that China is back as a world power after a two hundred year hiatus; that Chinese culture is admirable and that China’s intentions are benign, this last is variously expressed as a ‘peaceful rise’<sup>16</sup> and from 2007 an intent to ‘build a harmonious world.’<sup>17</sup> The message comes directly from Premier Hu Jintao and flows outwards from the party ideological apparatus.

### **The Audience**

The audience for China’s public diplomacy is two fold. The primary audience is global and seems to include both masses and elites. School children are increasingly targeted. While all nations are approached, the campaign plainly has special resonance with the Chinese Diaspora. This said, Chinese public diplomacy is also conducted with a domestic audience in mind. The Chinese government wishes above all to give the Chinese people the gift of the admiration of the world, to buttress their own legitimacy and buy off any doubt that the CCP might not be the best stewards of China’s destiny. Such sentiments may readily be detected in set-piece speeches by Lui Yushan, with their emphasis on western admiration for Chinese achievement in both its economic success and management of adversity.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> ‘Hu Jintao stressed enhancing Soft Power of Chinese culture,’ *Xinhua*, 15 October 2007,

<sup>15</sup> ‘Raise National Culture’s Soft Strength,’ *Xinhua*, 28 December 2007 as translated by *BBC Monitoring Asia Pacific* as ‘China urges ‘cultural soft strength’ ethnic unity in light of party congress, 6 January 2008, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Joshua Cooper Ramo, *Brand China*, Foreign Policy Center, London 2007 p. 8-9, online at <http://fpc.org.uk/fsblob/827.pdf> see also Zheng Bijian, *Peaceful Rise: Speeches of Zheng Bijian, 1997-2005*, Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC, 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Li Baojie, Cheng Yifeng and Wang Mian, ‘Soft Power a new focus at China’s Two Sessions.’ *Xinhua*, 14 March 2007.

<sup>18</sup> For a sample text see Liu Yunshan, ‘Lessons, thoughts...’ a speech of 31 July 2008, published on the *Qiushi* website in October and translated by *BBC Monitoring Asia-Pacific*, 23 October 2008 as ‘Chinese propaganda chief views problems, achievements in 2008.’

## The Mechanisms of Public Diplomacy

### i. Listening.

China is certainly listening to the world. We know from official statements that China is tracking both the course of anti-Chinese sentiment around the world, and international opinion around China. Negative opinion was a major driver of the rebuilding of Chinese public diplomacy. Positive foreign statements about China are fed back to the Chinese people as evidence that foreigners admire the accomplishments of 'Socialism with Chinese Characteristics' and accept China as a world power of the foremost rank.

China uses opinion polls to track its relationships. Recent innovations have included a poll from 2005 jointly designed and administered with Japanese counterparts to survey the state of mutual opinion.<sup>19</sup> Other examples of Chinese listening include the flurry of activity in 2007 to ensure that celebrations of the Year of the Pig did not offend Islamic nations. Yet more significantly, in the spring of 2007 international anger around China's support for the regime in Khartoum in the face of the Darfur genocide brought a reversal of Chinese foreign policy in East Africa.<sup>20</sup>

The chief mechanism for listening is the growing network of embassies and consulates across the world. China is investing heavily in developing regional expertise within its diplomatic corps, sending thousands of its best students overseas to study their target state and society first hand.<sup>21</sup> Unlike the western penchant for the generalist, the Chinese Foreign Service encourages officers to work entire careers in their specialist geographical area. The rising generation of diplomats will be well placed to learn from their experience and to inject local knowledge into the making of Chinese foreign policy for years to come.

### ii. Advocacy.

China's international advocacy includes both the traditional CCP techniques of leader speeches and articles in the state Xinhua news agency and increasingly western-style press conferences. Zhao Qizeng's institutional reforms included an upgrading of China's ability to address the foreign media. The wake-up call seems to have been the SARS outbreak of 2002. As Anne-Marie Brady has noted, in the wake of the clumsy cover-up China began studying spin as practiced in the west, taking the Blair government in Britain as one model of how to do it.<sup>22</sup> Moves towards openness and interactivity were part of this process and hence, in December 2004, Zhao astonished a gathering of journalists at Beijing's Kunlun hotel by presenting them with the names and phone numbers of the seventy-five spokespersons of every ministry and commission under the

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<sup>19</sup> 'Chinese, Japanese NGOs release poll on bilateral relations,' *Xinhua*, 24 August 2005.

<sup>20</sup> 'Shaming China on Darfur,' *Boston Globe*, 31 May 2007.

<sup>21</sup> Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive*, p. 65-66.

<sup>22</sup> Brady as quoted in Tania Branigan, 'China looks to Labour to learn secrets of spin,' *The Guardian* (London), 21 March 2009, p. 23.

State Council. This, he promised, would be an annual event.<sup>23</sup> Other advocacy initiatives included the launch of an overseas edition of the *People's Daily* and a number of English language websites.<sup>24</sup> The domestic and international handling of the news of the Sichuan earthquake in the spring of 2008 revealed a much greater facility.<sup>25</sup>

### iii. Cultural Diplomacy.

Beginning with the tenure of Zhao Qizheng at SCIO, China has devoted increasing energy to the field of cultural diplomacy. It seems to be particularly important to the CCP leadership that Chinese culture receives the admiration that it deserves around the world. The Beijing Olympics of 2008 and forthcoming both Shanghai Expo reflect this. Other initiatives include major exhibitions such as the visit of the Terracotta Army to London, 'China Weeks,' and tours for artists.

The central project of Chinese cultural diplomacy is the rapidly growing network of Confucius Institutes around the world. Their title reassuringly emphasizes the glories of the classical Chinese past rather than the vibrant present (or controversial Communist history) but the Institutes activities typically emphasize opportunities to get to know contemporary China rather than some historical abstract. These institutes are officially shared enterprises between the Chinese government's language teaching agency, known as *Hanban*, and local institutional hosts (usually universities). The hosts receive a start-up subsidy from Hanban and provide a home to teachers supplied by that agency to deliver language tuition. In 2006 the government set a goal of establishing more than one hundred institutes within five years. This target has already been realized and it seems likely to break 200 by the end of 2010.<sup>26</sup>

### iv. Exchange Diplomacy.

Some nations – Japan most prominently – couch their public diplomacy in terms of exchange, seeking to build reciprocity into as many activities as possible. China is not limited by such a priority. China certainly participates in mutual educational exchanges, though one might suspect that the mutuality is seen as a price of access to foreign institutions and audiences. Recent years have seen a flurry of new bilateral agreements with partners around the world from Austria to Zimbabwe. Institutions which manage people-to-people exchanges, such as the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries have flourished. China also expanded its recruitment of

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<sup>23</sup> 'China makes public names of government spokespersons for the first time,' *Xinhua*, 28 December 2004, also 'Hong Kong daily analyses official's role in improving China's public image,' *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, 7 June 2005.

<sup>24</sup> 'English web platform opens,' *China Daily*, 17 September 2004 on the English site at <http://english.sohu.com> – a state-private partnership of the *China Daily* and the private search engine company Sohu.com.

<sup>25</sup> For Liu Yunshan and coverage of the media response to the earthquake see 'Senior leader hails media worker covering quake,' *Xinhua*, 17 May 2008.

<sup>26</sup> 'Confucius Institute: promoting language, culture and friendliness,' *Xinhua*, 2 October 2006. In some poorer countries Chinese aid ensures that it is cheaper to be educated at a Chinese-funded school than within the national system. Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive*, pp. 67-69.

international students, bringing twenty percent more with every passing year. The Ministry of Education expected rolls to top 120,000 by 2008.<sup>27</sup>

Exchanges have been used to promote international study of the Chinese language, lately targeting younger groups of students, providing a stream of foreign language teachers for overseas service and wooing foreign school principals through trips to China, as priorities shift from the university to secondary and even primary school sector. In June 2007 the Office of the Chinese Language Council declared that 30 million people around the world were now learning Chinese and predicted that this figure would hit 100 million by 2010.<sup>28</sup> In February 2007 the Premier of the State Council, Wen Jiabao paid tribute to the value of exchanges in presenting China's best face to the world, noting that they have: 'fostered an image of China as a country that is committed to reform and opening-up, a country of unity and dynamism, a country that upholds equality and values friendship, and a country that is sincere and responsible.'<sup>29</sup>

One example of exchange is the agreement between China and Russia to designate 2009 Russian year in China and 2010 China year in Russia with attending language teaching initiatives. The occasion for the celebration is the sixtieth anniversary of the Soviet recognition of and friendship treaty with the People's Republic.<sup>30</sup>

## **v. International Broadcasting.**

China has a long history of international broadcasting through Radio Beijing. Its lead agency in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is Chinese Central Television, whose channel 9 – launched in September 2000 – is in the English language and intended for foreign audiences.<sup>31</sup> The channel is carried internationally on a variety of platforms Rupert Murdoch's Sky satellite to the UK and Fox services in the USA, and Vanuatu in the mid-Pacific.<sup>32</sup> China has paid particular attention to distribution, seeking out contracts for local rebroadcast of their media feeds. CCTV 9 has displaced CNN as the prime foreign feed in several African markets, including Kenya, and Radio Beijing is rapidly accumulating local affiliates to rebroadcast Radio Beijing on the FM wave band as Africa moves finally away from the Shortwave.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> 'Number of foreign students in China rises 20 percent annually,' *Xinhua*, 19 January 2006 as cited in Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive*, p. 118.

<sup>28</sup> 'Overseas craze for Chinese spreads from universities to schools,' *Xinhua*, 26 June 2007 see also 'Foreign headmasters follow Chinese language teaching trail,' *Xinhua*, 20 June 2007 and '110 British headmasters visit China for language teaching co-op,' *Xinhua*, 27 May 2007.

<sup>29</sup> Wen Jiabao, 'Our Historical Tasks at the Primary Stage of Socialism and Several Issues Concerning China's Foreign Policy,' *People's Daily*, 27 February 2007 (translation *Xinhua*, 5 March 2007).

<sup>30</sup> For coverage see <http://www.cctv.com/english/20090321/101135.shtml>

<sup>31</sup> 'China to launch all-English channel tomorrow,' *Xinhua*, 24 September 2000.

<sup>32</sup> On the Murdoch deals see 'Danny Gittings and Julian Borger, 'Homer and Bart realize Murdoch's dream of China coup,' *The Guardian*, 6 September 2001, p. 3 and 'Murdoch gets approval for Chinese TV service,' *The Australian Financial Review*, 7 March 2003, p. 63; 'China's English international channel to air in Vanuatu,' *Xinhua*, 10 August 2005.

<sup>33</sup> On China in Africa see Adam Clayton Powell III, 'Chinese TV extends its reach into Africa,' 19 December 2005, USC Center on Public Diplomacy web site at



CCTV has diversified into other languages. 2004 saw the launch of CCTV E&F, a bilingual French/Spanish feed which split into single language services CCTV E and CCTV F in Spanish and French respectively in 2007. CCTV is presently hiring staff to launch both Arabic and Russian language channels towards the end of 2009.<sup>34</sup> While these channels are fairly easy to view – CCTV 9 and CCTV E are both on the Dish satellite within the United States – audiences are reportedly small. CCTV 9 has 90% of its viewers at home, or which 80% were Chinese wishing to improve their English. The channels, however, operate as badges of prestige as much as actual ideological delivery apparatus, and are not subject to the same market pressures as commercial channels.<sup>35</sup>

The content of CCTV 9 has reflected a need to present something close to real journalism rather than the wooden litany of achievements and upcoming cultural events which once typified broadcasts. From 2003 onwards a new openness has been detectable, with CCTV 9 presenting stories about China's pollution problems and its energy crisis which would have been swept under the carpet in previous eras. In the spring of 2004 CCTV 9 announced a major re-launch to include the employment of foreign anchors and a consultant from the Murdoch stable, John Terenzio. With disarming honesty the station's controller Jiang Heping told the *South China Morning Post* that: 'We are taking great efforts to minimize the tone of propaganda, to balance our reports and to be objective. But we definitely won't be reporting as much negative domestic news as the Western media.'<sup>36</sup>

Chinese public diplomacy hence seems poised to engage the same issues of the boundary between news and advocacy that have loomed so large in the history of western international broadcasting and similarly now has to consider how domestic negatives should be treated in public diplomacy. In February 2007 an article in *The People's Daily* under the byline of Wen Jiabao, declared: 'We should conduct public diplomacy in a more effective way. We should inform the outside world of the achievements we have made in reform, opening-up and modernization in a comprehensive, accurate and timely manner. At the same time, we should be frank about the problems we have.'<sup>37</sup>

## vi. Diplomacy of Deeds

In parallel with the informational engagement with international audiences, China pays close attention to the diplomacy of deeds, seeking to win friends around the world by programs of aid and 'good works': these activities range from aid and development

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[http://uscpublicdiplomacy.com/index.php/newsroom/journal\\_detail/051219\\_chinese\\_tv\\_extends\\_its\\_reach\\_into\\_africa/](http://uscpublicdiplomacy.com/index.php/newsroom/journal_detail/051219_chinese_tv_extends_its_reach_into_africa/)

<sup>34</sup> For the recruitment process see <http://www.cctv.com/english/20090119/105739.shtml>

<sup>35</sup> For discussion of audience see Gary D. Rawnsley, 'China talks back: Public Diplomacy and Soft Power for the Chinese Century,' in Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (ed's), *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy*, Routledge: London, 2008, p. 286.

<sup>36</sup> 'CCTV international to re-launch, add new languages,' *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, 6 April 2005, and author's own viewing.

<sup>37</sup> Wen Jiabao, 'Our Historical Tasks at the Primary Stage of Socialism and Several Issues Concerning China's Foreign Policy,' *People's Daily*, 27 February 2007 (translation *Xinhua*, 5 March 2007).



work to targeted investment. China makes a particular virtue of not requiring any political *quid pro quo* of the sort expected by western donor nations, famously courting pariahs like the regime in Sudan or Zimbabwe.<sup>38</sup> Chinese aid sometimes includes assistance with media development. In Venezuela China has assisted the development of Hugo Chavez's satellite TV channel Telesur. In Zimbabwe China provided the equipment to enable radio jamming by the Mugabe regime.<sup>39</sup>

A sub-field of China's diplomacy of the deed is the entry of Chinese public figures into the realm of Celebrity diplomacy. Venturing where westerners including Princess Diana and Angelina Jolie have gone before, Chinese celebrities are now identifying themselves and China with international aid work around the world. The pianist Lang Lang is now a UNICEF goodwill ambassador and basketball-player Yao Ming and actress Zhang Ziyi are both goodwill ambassadors for the Special Olympics.<sup>40</sup>

### **The Professionals.**

The history of public diplomacy bureaucracies around the world is typically the history of turf wars and clashing approaches to the business of communication. This was the case in the old Soviet Union and has been the case in the United States also. While there are differences in approach between the various elements of Chinese public diplomacy – the most obvious being the element of self criticism allowed on occasion at CCTV 9 – no turf war has yet broken into the open and instead China's public diplomacy displays remarkable cohesiveness. One of the more interesting features of Chinese public diplomacy is its ability to rally support among the regular citizens and international Diaspora, as seen during set-piece confrontations like international criticism to the route of the Olympic torch in the spring of 2009. While a certain uniformity of placards and pro-China rallies suggested official coordination, the scale of participation among overseas Chinese revealed a popular embracing of the cause. China's presence of the World Wide Web seems to be based on enthusiastic individuals rather than a state cyber-corps, though the effect is the same.

### **The Domestic Audience**

The indirect domestic audience remains a prime driver of Chinese public diplomacy. This is not surprising. Winning opinion in Kansas will help the Chinese economy in a round about way, no doubt, but it is the fear of losing opinion at home that keeps members of the polit bureau awake at night. China is not unique in this. The old Soviet Union ran much of its foreign propaganda to convince the home audience that their nation was the envy of the world, and U.S. public diplomacy too often tends towards a performance for the domestic market, with an eye to the four year political cycle.

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<sup>38</sup> Kurlantzick, *Charm Offensive*, p. 44.

<sup>39</sup> 'Zimbabwe uses "Chinese Technology" to disrupt VOA radio signal,' *BBC Monitoring*, 5 July 2006.

<sup>40</sup> David Patrick Stearns, 'Chinese pianist Lang Lang strikes the right keys,' *Philadelphia Enquirer*, 18 April 2006; 'Chinese Sensation Ziyi Zhang Joins Special Olympics as Newest Global Ambassador,' *PR Newswire*, 16 November 2006; 'Yao Ming appears as Ambassador to the Special Olympics,' *Xinhua*, 22 July 2006.

## The Next Phase

China's declared objective is to further expand its cultural and media presence overseas. Speeches by leaders reveal both a belief that an international media is a badge of prestige and that further influence flows from the possession of such organs. As propaganda minister Liu Yushan put it in an essay published in January 2009:

It has become an urgent strategic task for us to make our communication capability match our international status. In this modern era, who gains the advanced communication skills, the powerful communication capability and whose culture and value is more widely spread is able to more effectively influence the world.<sup>41</sup>

China's expansion of the Xinhua agency – adding bureaus – and its plans for a 24 hour news channel and the projected launch of a global English language newspaper are significant.<sup>42</sup> It is unlikely that the paper will win a wide readership in the USA in a formal sense of people sitting on the New York subway reading a copy, but an increased flow of Xinhua stories circulating on the world wide web is inevitable, and with the crisis in western international newsgathering, stories from a Chinese perspective could easily move to plug the gaps, especially in spaces like Latin America and Africa where not being America is a palpable asset.

## Conclusion:

China is doing nothing wrong in its public diplomacy drive. It is wise from China's point of view. The wrong would be for the west to ignore it. The appropriate response of the west should be to meet the overtures for exchange in the spirit in which they are intended and to accept opportunities to know China better and facilitate China's knowing more of the west. Equally, where China is challenging the western presence, and displacing western voices, as it its drive to accumulate FM radio affiliates in Africa, the west, and the United States specifically, needs to raise its game. I will not argue that the United States needs to expand its public diplomacy solely to keep pace with China, any more than it should do so solely to prevail over radical Islam. I believe that the United States needs to expand its public diplomacy because that is the only way to effectively conduct foreign policy in the twenty first century. In an age when power increasingly rests with the people, success requires effectively engaging with the people. Anything that this committee can do to encourage the rebuilding of American public diplomacy would be a wise investment in this country's future and the future of the ideals on which it is built.

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<sup>41</sup> Quoted in David Barboza, 'China aims to create a global news empire,' *International Herald Tribune*, 15 January 2009, p. 1.

<sup>42</sup> For coverage of these plans see Vivian Wu and Adam Chen, 'Beijing in 45 b Yuan global media drive,' *South China Morning Post*, 13 January 2009, web edition; Peter Ford, 'Beijing launching a Chinese CNN to burnish image abroad,' *Christian Science Monitor*, 5 February 2009, p. 1.

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